

We claim:

1. A computer implemented method of providing a customer service agent with variable compensation information, wherein the agent earns both fixed compensation and variable compensation for handling customer inquiries, the method comprising:

displaying to the agent a current amount of variable compensation for the agent based on the agent's current performance level in handling customer inquiries;

displaying to the agent a graphical user interface adapted to allow the agent to interactively change the agent's performance level; and

displaying to the agent a change in the amount of variable compensation based on the change in the agent's performance level.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the agent's current performance level as a function of customer satisfaction measure of the agent's handling of customer inquiries.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the agent's current performance level as a function of the agent's compliance with a work schedule.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the agent's current performance level as a function of a number of customer inquiries handled per time period.

5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the agent's current performance level as a function of a measure of customer inquiries resolved by the agent.

6. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining the agent's current performance level as a function of a rate of  
customer inquiries transferred by the agent to a customer satisfaction  
survey system.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
determining the agent's performance in comparison with other agents in a cohort  
including the agent.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
displaying to the agent a minimum measure of performance for the agent to be  
eligible for the variable compensation.
9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
displaying a payout grid, comprising a plurality of intersections, each intersection  
corresponding to a combination of a rate of handling customer  
inquiries and a measure of resolved inquiries, and associated with a  
variable payout factor.
10. A computer implemented user interface for providing variable compensation  
information to agents, the user interface provided by a computer application executing  
on a computer system, the user interface comprising:  
a display window including a current performance measure for the agent, and a  
current variable compensation amount based on the current  
performance measure; and  
at least one interactive graphical element that is adapted to be directly  
manipulated by the agent to change the agent's current performance  
measure, wherein the current variable compensation amount is  
automatically adjusted in response to the change in the performance  
measure.

11. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of customer satisfaction measure of the agent's handling of customer inquiries.

12. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of the agent's compliance with a work schedule.

13. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of number of customer inquiries handled per time period by the agent.

14. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of a measure of customer inquiries resolved by the agent.

15. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of a rate of customer inquiries transferred by the agent to a customer satisfaction survey system.

16. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the current performance measure is a function of the agent's performance in comparison with other agents in a cohort including the agent.

17. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the display window further comprises a minimum measure of performance for the agent to be eligible for the variable compensation.

18. The user interface of claim 10, wherein the display window further comprises:

a payout grid, comprising a plurality of intersections, each intersection corresponding to a combination of a rate of handling customer inquiries and a measure of resolved inquiries, and associated with a variable payout factor, wherein the variable payout factor is used to automatically adjust the variable compensation amount.

19. A computer implemented system for determining variable compensation for call center agents, the system comprising:

- a telephone system including telephones to allow call center agents to provide help to customers over the telephones and a workstation adapted for monitoring the call center agents' use of the telephones, the monitor collecting data including when the call center agents are logged on to the telephone system, how many calls the call center agents receive, and whether the calls the call center agents receive are transferred by the call center agents to a customer feedback system;
- a customer feedback system for receiving calls transferred by a call center agents, and determining from the customers on the received calls a satisfaction level of the customers;
- a call database connected to the telephone system for receiving and storing data indicative of how many calls the call center agents receive and whether the calls the call center agents receive are transferred by the call center agents;
- a schedule database connected to the telephone system for receiving and storing data indicative of when the call center agents are logged on to the telephone system;
- a feedback database connected to the customer feedback system for receiving and storing data indicative of whether customers inquiries were resolved and the overall satisfaction of the customers for each call center agent;
- a processor for receiving information from the call database, the schedule database, and the feedback database and, based on the received information, calculating variable compensation for each call center agent; and
- a display tool for receiving the calculated variable compensation for a call center agent and displaying the variable compensation in real time to a call center agent.

20. A computer implemented method for determining variable compensation for a call center agent, the method comprising:

collecting information on the number of customer support telephone calls  
received by the call center agent;

collecting information on the times that the call center agent works;

collecting customer satisfaction information of customers handled by the call  
center agent;

calculating, based on the collected information and in response to a received  
command, a variable compensation amount for the call center agent;  
and

displaying the calculated variable compensation amount to allow the call center  
agent to determine the variable compensation.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected  
information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for  
the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function of the customer  
satisfaction information.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected  
information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for  
the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function the information on  
the times that the call center agent works.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected  
information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for  
the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function of the information on the number of customer support telephone calls received by the call center agent.

24. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function of a measure of customer inquiries resolved by the agent.

25. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function of a rate of customer inquiries transferred by the agent to a customer satisfaction survey system.

26. The method of claim 20, wherein calculating, based on the collected information and in response to a received command, a variable compensation amount for the call center agent, further comprises:

determining the variable compensation amount as a function a level of performance of the agent in comparison with other agents in a cohort including the agent.